

Arizona eLearning Task Force

Minutes of the Meeting

Thursday, June 7, 2007

10:00am – 12:00pm

Arizona Department of Education

Conference Room 419

Members Present:

Casey Loman

Rosalina Escandon

Rod Lenniger

Debra Lorenzen

Theodore Kraver

Joseph O'Reilly

Cathy Poplin

DJ Harper – Representing Chris Cummiskey

Members Not Present:

Jerry D'Agostino

Sandi Grandberry (on vacation)

Lisa Long

Handouts:

- June 7, 2007 Agenda
- Minutes from the May 7, 2007 meeting
- Latest draft of eLearning PIJ
- GAZEL eLearning Summit – Theodore Kraver
- Future eLearning Task Force Meeting Dates for Summer

Senator John Huppenthal Speaks to Task Force

Before the official e-Learning Task Force (ELTF) meeting began, Sen. Huppenthal stopped by to speak to the ELTF regarding the “scoreboard” software. Sen. Huppenthal reported that he has contacted several companies regarding a real time “scoreboard” for classroom use; and believes the software does not exist. He also went to the attorneys for the Senate and they advised Sen. Huppenthal that the ELTF could focus solely on getting the new software created in lieu of the current focus of a middle school math pilot.

Theodore Kraver stated that from the RFI responses that have been received to date nearly half already have assessments as a part of the software. Sen. Huppenthal advised that the assessments might be there but the item bank has to be fairly large. Joseph O'Reilly added that there are companies with large item banks but not certain if there is one with the quality of information we want and need for the “scoreboard” software.

10:10am - Sen. Huppenthal leaves to return to the state legislature.

Welcome and Introductions – Reminder that the meeting is recorded on tape and available for full review.

Cathy Poplin called the meeting to official order at 10:12am. Cathy informed the ELTF that Jerry D'Agostino will be leaving Arizona for a new teaching position in Ohio. Cathy will look into Jerry's term with the ELTF, as to whether he needs to turn in a letter of resignation or let his term run out and then bring in someone else.

Cathy Poplin asked the ELTF members to review the minutes of the May 7th meeting. ELTF members noted no changes. Theodore Kraver moved to accept the minutes, Joseph O'Reilly seconds. Minutes are approved.

Cathy introduced Nan Williams to the ELTF as the new Director of Education Technology with the Arizona Department of Education.

Theodore updates the ELTF on House Bill 2742 Instructional Technology Systems Grants Fund. The bill is still in House and Senate budget negotiations. The bill includes \$4 million that will go toward eLearning transformation; school by school. The language of the bill has not changed.

Debra Lorenzen reminded the ELTF about teachers taking on-line professional development courses offered through ASSET and IDEAL. For more information on when the next round of classes begins, ELTF can check on the IDEAL/ASSET website.

Task Force Discussion

Much discussion occurred as a follow up to Senator Huppenthal's visit.

Comments included but not limited to:

- Isn't what the Senator said going to change everything?
- The original bill language was re-read: A three-year pilot program is to be established. A central digital curriculum system to deliver mathematics course work that will be aligned with academic standards. Assessment results will be produced at the individual student level to monitor student's growth. Teachers will access information in real time, and both school and district administrators will be able to access data at the student, class, school, grade, and district level.
- Students and teachers want to see data in real time at the item level; not just in real time after taking a test.
- It is difficult to create a system to "motivate" people. You can only create an environment that will allow them to motivate themselves; you can't motivate someone else.
- If a company is asked to develop software to do something specific, they have to be given very specific requirements. The requirements can't be changing in real time and they can't have all these variables. It would be impossible to build. To create the Senator's vision, \$3 million may or may not be enough.
- Will the vendor who is paid to create a ground breaking unique software for Arizona be able to take and sell to other states? Who owns the intellectual property? Will the software that was built for us be licensed to others? It changes the whole character of project.
- Recommend finding an appropriate eLearning system and have it tailored to what we are trying to do here in Arizona. Run a pilot and find out if it can be implemented across the state; and at what grade levels, whether it is good or bad.
- It was suggested that the eLearning Task Force continue the course that was started; don't design new software but have linkage points in that software that we can build on.
- Continue with the concept of getting something up and running and next year add to it.
- Will the other legislatures feel that we wasted money if we build new software and not proceed as a pilot project?
- The ELTF has put much time and effort into the work thus far. A RFI was written and lots of information has been gathered. The PIJ is nearly complete.
- The ELTF needs to continue down the path it is currently on; recognizing that there are gaps between the pilot and the finalized project.

- The ADE working group has looked at motivation as written in the legislation and Senator Huppenthal's vision and recommends including it in the RFP as a "nice to have but not required" item.

Cathy Poplin suggested that the ELTF define how we will continue with our interpretation of the bill. Rod Lenniger made a motion to continue developing the PIJ and then the RFP for a middle school math pilot project as indicated in the legislation. Theodore Kraver seconds the motion; all in favor, no one opposes.

Task Force Review of PIJ

Rod noticed a few corrections that could be made.

- Page 3, paragraph one - change the word "laptop" to "portable technology."
- Page 4, section C - "14 schools offer online courses in a pilot program", give more information regarding the "14 TABPI schools"; and the second sentence "Online education programs are offered by 24 states," change to "by comparison" online education offered in several other states.
- Page 5 – estimating the resource cost – who bears the cost? ADE?
- Page 6, section E – add another bullet stating the ELTF needs to make recommendations for future adoptions.
- Page 7, section H – Sept. 2007 "Initial project plan created" – wouldn't this come back from the vendor as a response to the RFP? And who is the 3rd party evaluator? Cathy Poplin informed Rod that WestEd may be a viable 3rd party to evaluate the overall program.
 - Change the word "LEA" to schools
 - Between Oct 2008 and Nov 2011 – add evaluations and status reports
- Page 11 – Operating cost – we truly don't know the operating cost
 - DJ Harper – commented that not all these operating costs are operating costs
 - Rod suggested we will need to add maintenance cost

Rod pointed out the areas that need to be fine tuned; the sections that the committee needs to pay close attention are:

1. "As Is"
2. "To Be"

Joseph asked about page 6 – Roles and Responsibilities. The last bullet needed to include those that are affected by the program. ELTF decided to remove "eLearning task force" from first part of the last bullet.

The PIJ will be sent out before the next meeting and can be voted on electronically.

RFP process and the eLearning Task Force's Role – Richard Adickes, ADE Procurement Office

Richard Adickes was asked to advise ELTF on the RFP process and what can be expected. Richard started with the development phase of the RFP. He stated that the "scope of work" must be extremely complete in order to communicate what is wanted. He advised not to put options in the RFP but to add them as addendums. If you take a look at the intellectual property rights for ADE you will find that anything created with our money belongs to us. Richard also pointed out that there are several areas of importance.

1. Pricing – you need to know what needs to be priced.

2. Reports – needs to be included in scope of work. What type of information do you need and want in these report(s)/
3. Special Terms and Conditions:
 - a. Will vendors provide training? What kind of training is needed?
 - b. Length of training? How long it will take? Term of contract and any extensions(There are a set of uniformed terms and conditions for the state of Arizona that have to be included; such as the intellectual property clause mentioned above.)
4. Special Instructions – these are the areas that we will evaluate your responses on. Your responses must be evaluated by these special instructions. Needs to be specific.
5. Solicitation must be on the street a minimum of 14 days after it has been advertised. Since this is a combination of service and commodity it will have to be advertised in the newspaper and sent to all who applied. In this case, Richard recommends that we allow a month to complete the response due to the complexity of the project.

Rod asked if it is OK to look at other states eLearning RFPs. Richard advised yes and that it might be a good idea. Cathy agreed to post a request on the State Educational Technology Directors Association (SETDA) site. She will report the findings at the August meeting.

Once the responses are received and the evaluation committee has made their first round of cuts, ELTF can then ask for clarification on any area(s) that are unclear. We can also ask them to come in and give us a presentation on their program. This can be an ongoing process until the committee has made their final decision.

If no vendor has what we are looking for, we can cancel the solicitation. This can be done at any time.

Rod asked if we will need a bidders' conference. Richard advised we allow two weeks after the RFP is published and then hold a bidders' conference. This is where the vendors can ask questions of the agency regarding the RFP. At the conference we can only discuss what is in the document. Rod also pointed out that if the process isn't closely followed it could go to appeal. Thus, if a question is asked and answered for a particular vendor and not another, this could lead to an appeal.

Cathy informed the group that once the RFP becomes public all questions will be answered by Richard. It will be his responsibility to provide all questions and answers to all bidders.

Taskforce members asked if we could talk to vendors about the RFP coming out. Richard advised yes up until the time the RFP is made public. A question was asked if we can talk about the details in the RFP. Richard suggested that we limit the details. However, it was noted that in the minutes posted on the eLearning Taskforce website there are details about the RFP. Joseph asked since our meetings are public, should we go into executive session when we begin to discuss the RFP? Richard advised that during the development/drafting phase of the RFP, the Taskforce should go into executive session to keep all information regarding the RFP confidential. Since the RFP has already been discussed at several meetings, Cathy said she will ask our attorney, Kim Anderson for an opinion.

When the RFP responses come in, the RFP then goes to an evaluation committee. Once the evaluation phase begins, ELTF members can not discuss the RFP to anyone, not even other ELTF members. It can only be discussed by the evaluation committee. Evaluation committee

members will have to sign a confidentiality agreement. The ELTF members thanked Richard for his time and the information he provided.

GAZEL's Arizona eLearning Summit – Theodore Kraver

Theodore informed the ELTF that GAZEL has invited the eLearning Task Force and ADE to participate in their summit on September 27th. The summit will not focus on education and networking but on policy issues, current policy and workshops to develop new policy for eLearning adoption in Arizona. ELTF members suggested they send a representative to the summit.

eLearning Task Force Collaboration within IDEAL – Mark Nichols, ASU

Mark Nichols gave an interactive whiteboard presentation on how ELTF members can log onto IDEAL and use the collaborative environment. They can also chat online with each other. Cathy will ask Kim Anderson if the ELTF can chat/discuss online regarding the project. Cathy and Mark will look into ELTF members receiving their IDEAL user ID and password and instructions on how to use IDEAL website.

Future eLearning Meeting Dates

There are going to be several ELTF members unable to attend during the month of July; and we won't have enough people for a quorum. The ELTF members decided not to have a meeting for the month of July. Next meeting dates are:

- August 10, 2007 10am – 12pm
- September 14, 2007 10am - 12pm

Public Testimony

ELTF received a request to speak from a member of the audience. Mary Platner, special education teacher with Scottsdale Unified, introduced a grant proposal for a state license for accessible learning support software. Mary currently works with software that provides an aggregate score for the class or an individual student, as well as an item analysis per class or student. Mary also is with NIMAS (National Instructional Materials Accessibility Standard)

Other guests:

Jonathan Lindsey – Fennemore Craig/Boeing

Adjourn

Meeting was adjourned at 12:10pm